

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 114662

63

ORIGIN ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIE-00

INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 IO-14 /094 R

66610

DRAFTED BY: ARA/CEN:MCOTTER

APPROVED BY: ARA/CEN:DLAZAR

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O R 312033Z MAY 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 114662

GUATEMALA FOR ROCAP

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ES, H

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH SALVADORAN AMBASSADOR RE

H/ES DISPUTE

1. SALVADORAN AMBASSADOR BERTRAND CALLED ON CEN MAY 29 ON INSTRUCTIONS OF HIS GOVERNMENT TO EXPLAIN POSTPONEMENT OF MAY 29 JALAPA CHIEFS OF STATE MEETING. BERTRAND SAID THE MEETING WAS POSPONED WHEN PRESIDENT MOLINA DECIDED NO FORWARD MOVEMENT WAS POSSIBLE. HE NOTED THAT HONDURAS CONTINUES TO INSIST ON A SOLUTION INVOLVING ARBITRATION WHILE EL SALVADOR WANTS A COMMISSION TO DELINEATE SECTIONS OF THE BORDER NOT UNDER DISPUTE. HE SAID IMMEDIATE REASON FOR EL SALVADOR'S REACTION WAS THREAT BY GENERAL SOMOZA LAST WEEKEND TO CALL UPON OAS ORGAN OF CONSULTATION TO BRING
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 114662

PRESSURE ON EL SALVADOR TO COME TO TERMS. DEPTOFFS SAID

OUR INFORMATION DIFFERS AND SUMMARIZED FOR BERTRAND INFORMATION IN MANAGUA 206A , WITHOUT, OF COURSE, DISCLOSING SOURCE OTHER THAN TO STATE INFORMATION DID NOT COME FROM HONDURAS. BERTRAND SAID HE WILL ATTEMPT TO VERIFY FACTS WITH HIS FON MIN.

2. BERTRAND PAINTED A BLEAK PICTURE OF AN INSECURELY SEATED GOES, THREATENED WITH BEING OVERTHROWN IF IT MUST CONCEDE TO HONDURAS, TO BE FOLLOWED BY A GOVERNMENT ' ' QUOTE EVEN MORE IMPROVISATIONAL THAN THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT UNQUOTE. HE SAID IF ORGAN OF CONSULTATION INVOKED OR IF THE COMMITTEE OF SEVEN SHOULD ISSUE A CONDEMNATION OF EL SALVADOR, SUCH AN EVENTUALITY WOULD BE LIKELY. DEPTOFFS EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT HE CHARACTERIZATION OF THE GOES AS UNSTABLE, NOTING THAT WE HAD UNDERSTOOD IT IS FIRMLY IN POWER AND ENJOYS SUPPORT OF MASSES OF ELECTORATE AND MILITARY. WE ALSO REFUSED TO SPECULATE AS TO USG POSITION SHOULD THE COMMITTEE OF SEVEN ATTEMPT TO ISSUE A CONDEMNATION OF EL SALVADOR, NOTING THAT WE HAVE NO INFORMATION THAT SUCH A MOVE IS IN THE OFFING.

3. BERTRAND SAID THAT THE GOES SEES ONE POSSIBLE AVENUE TOWARD A SOLUTION: A PROPOSAL THAT THE OAS SEND A QUOTE FACT-FINDING UNQUOTE MISSION TO HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR TO PIN DOWN POSITIONS. HE SAID SUCH A MISSION MIGHT FIND A SOLUTION AND WOULD, AT THE VERY LEAST, SHOW THAT HONDURAS, NOT EL SALVADOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FAILURE TO REACH AN AGREEMENT. HE SAID THAT THE GOES COULD NOT MAKE SUCH A PROPOSAL AND, ON INSTRUCTION, WISHED TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE USG MIGHT PUT FORWARD THE PROPOSAL. DEPTOFFS REITERATED FREQUENTLY EXPRESSED US POLICY OF DOING WHATEVER WE COULD TO BE HELPFUL BUT REFUSING TO GET IN THE MIDDLE. WE THEN RETRACED HISTORY OF NEGOTIATIONS, STARTING WITH MEXICO, THEN DELAY PAST MARCH 15 ELECTIONS AT REQUEST OF EL SALVADOR AND FINALLY LATEST BREAKDOWN WITH CLEAR INDICATION, THIS TIME AT LEAST, THAT EL SALVADOR MUST BEAR THE RESPONSIBILITY. FINALLY, WE NOTED THAT UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES THE GOH WOULD CERTAINLY TAKE PROPOSAL FOR

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 114662

ANOTHER C-7 MISSION TO BE NO MORE THAN ANOTHER SALVADORAN STALL, AND WOULD SEE US SUPPORT OF THAT PLOY AS LEANING TOWARDS GOES. OUR POSITION OF IMPARTIALITY WILL NOT PERMIT US TO BE PLACED IN THAT SITUATION.

4. CEN DIRECTOR THEN WENT ON TO SUGGEST THAT HE MIGHT BE WILLING TO RECOMMEND TO HIS SUPERIORS USG SUPPORT FOR C-7 INITIATIVE REQUESTED IF THERE WERE VERY GOOD REASON

TO BELIEVE THAT THIS PRESENTED REAL POSSIBILITY OF SOLUTION HE SUGGESTED THAT IF GOES WERE WILLING TO PRESENT TO C-7, ON CONFIDENTIAL BASIS, A LIST OF SPECIFIC POINTS COM-PRISING ITS FINAL POSITION (WE EMPHASIZED THIS WAS NOT TO BE A BARGAINING POSITION), SO THAT A SIMILAR LIST MIGHT THEN BE SOUGHT FROM GOH AS A MEANS OF EXACTLY DEFINING THE REAL AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT, SUCH POSSIBILITY MIGHT BE SHOWN TO EXIST AND IN THAT EVENT WE WOULD BE WILLING TO RECOMMEND REQUESTED INITIATIVE. BERTRAND SAID HE WOULD PASS CEN SUGGESTION TO FON MIN BORGONOVO.

6. COMMENT: IT APPEARS GOES HAS GOTTEN COLD FEET AGAIN AND IS AGAIN IN THE POSITION OF HAVING TO EXPLAIN ITS STANCE. WE DELIBERATELY TOOK A TOUGHER LINE THAN IN SIMILAR MEETINGS IN THE PAST. WE ALSO ATTEMPTED TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT FEAR OF A COUP IN EL SALVADOR WILL NOT FRIGHTEN US INTO SUPPORTING GOES POLICY IN THIS MATTER. (IS IT POSSIBLE BERTRAND -- OR BORGONOVO -- BELIEVES THIS LINE? IF SO, WHY? WHOM WOULD THEY FEAR?) PERHAPS BERTRAND'S REPORT WILL MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THEIR PROCRASTINATION IS AFFECTING EVEN US AND THUS FORCE MOLINA TO RECONSIDER HIS POSITION. MEMCON FOLLOWS. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BOUNDARY DETERMINATION, ARBITRATION, BOUNDARY CLAIMS, NEGOTIATIONS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE114662
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ARA/CEN:MCOTTER
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740138-0667
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974052/aaaaabev.tel
Line Count: 137
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 SEP 2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <19 MAR 2003 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ECT: CONVERSATION WITH SALVADORAN AMBASSADOR RE H/ES DISPUTE
TAGS: PFOR, ES, HO, US, OAS
To: SAN SALVADOR
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005